Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 199640
ORIGIN NODS-00

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APPROVED BY S/S:MR ANDERSON
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S E C R E T STATE 199640

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USUN FOR AMB LEONARD

FOL RPT BONN 13580 ACTION SECSTATE 19 AUG 77 QUOTE

S E C R E T BONN 13580

NODIS (MSG UPGRADED PER S/S)

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652:XGDS-3
TAGS: PARM, ST, GW
SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR TEST SITE

REFS: (A) STATE 195279; (B) LAGOS 9337;
(C) BONN 13059; (D) STATE 197323

1. ON AUGUST 18, I CONVEYED INFORMATION IN REF A TO
FONOFF STATE SECRETARY VAN WELL. AT THE SAME TIME, I
MENTIONED THE REPORT IN REF B THAT LAGOS ANTI-APARTHEID
CONFERENCE IS LIKELY TO PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE
SAG'S NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT AND TO THE HELP IT IS
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ALLEGEDLY RECEIVING FROM "CERTAIN STATES."

2. VAN WELL SAID SOUTH AFRICAN AUTHORITIES HAD TOLD
THE FLD THAT (A) THE SAG NUCLEAR PROGRAM WAS DEVOTED
SOLELY TO PEACEFUL PURPOSES; (B) NO NUCLEAR TEST WAS
IMMINENT ("BEVORSTEHEND"); AND (C) SOUTH AFRICA HAD
NO COOPERATION ON NUCLEAR MATTERS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES.

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VAN WELL SAID HE HAD PASSED THIS INFORMATION TO SOVIET AMBASSADOR (FALIN) IN RESPONSE TO EARLIER SOVIET DEMARCHE TO FRG EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER SAG NUCLEAR PROGRAM (REF C). VAN WELL HAD TOLD FALIN THAT FRG WOULD ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION THROUGH CONTACTS WITH FRIENDLY GOVERNMENTS.

3. VAN WELL SAID THE FRG WAS CONSIDERING MAKING A MORE FORMAL REPLY TO THE SOVIET DEMARCHE. HE ALSO MENTIONED THAT THE FRG HAD RECEIVED AN "ORAL MESSAGE" FROM BREZHNEV TO SCHMIDT ON THE SAME SUBJECT. VAN WELL SAID THAT, IN ITS REPLY TO FALIN'S DEMARCHE, THE FRG MIGHT ADDRESS A COMMENT IN THE BREZHNEV MESSAGE THAT "WE KNOW SOUTH AFRICA COULD NOT DO IT (I.E., CARRY OUT NUCLEAR PROGRAM) ALONE." VAN WELL NOTED THAT TASS HAD BEEN MORE DIRECT IN IMPLYING THAT WESTERN STATES, INCLUDING THE FRG, WERE HELPING SOUTH AFRICA WITH ITS NUCLEAR PROGRAM. VAN WELL'S ASSOCIATE (HAUBER) INQUIRED IF U.S. HAD ALSO RECEIVED BREZHNEV MESSAGE AND HOW WE PLANNED TO HANDLE IT; I SAID I WAS UN-INFORMED.

4. VAN WELL SAID THE FRG CURRENTLY HAS NO NUCLEAR COOPERATION WITH SOUTH AFRICA. HE SAID HE WOULD DOUBLE-CHECK THIS, BUT SEEMED QUITE SURE OF HIS ASSERTION.

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5. VAN WELI NOTED THAT THE FRG BUYS URANIUM FROM SOUTH AFRICA, BUT TERMED THIS A PURELY COMMERCIAL MATTER. HE RECALLED THAT IN EARLY TO MID-1970'S, THE GERMAN PRIVATE FIRM "STEAG" HAD COOPERATED WITH THE SOUTH AFRICANS IN URANIUM ENRICHMENT RESEARCH. THIS HAD STOPPED, HE SAID, BECAUSE THE SOUTH AFRICANS LOST INTEREST AFTER DEVELOPING THEIR OWN URANIUM ENRICHMENT PROCESS WHICH THEY CONSIDERED BETTER THAN THE GERMAN ONE.

6. IN RESPONSE TO MY EMPHASIS ON DESIRABILITY OF CLEARLY DISASSOCIATING SUPPLIER NATIONS FROM SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM, VAN WELL SAID FRG NON-COOPERATION HAD BEEN CLEARLY SPELLED OUT AT LAST UNGA. CURRENTLY, FRG HAS BEEN EXPLAINING THIS POSITION DIRECTLY TO AFRICAN REPRESENTATIVES IN BONN. MINISTER OF STATE VON DOHNANYI, WHO WILL BE FRG REPRESENTATIVE AT LAGOS CONFERENCE, WILL BE FULLY BRIEFED AND WILL BE PREPARED TO REBUT CLEARLY ANY ALLEGATIONS RE ALLEGED FRG ASSISTANCE TO SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM.

7. AFTER MEETING WITH VAN WELL, HAUBER MENTIONED THAT, ACCORDING TO FRG INTELLIGENCE, SOUTH AFRICA WILL NOT BE

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IN A POSITION TO CARRY OUT A NUCLEAR EXPLOSION
FOR "AT LEAST ONE OR TWO YEARS."

8. I HAVE ANOTHER APPOINTMENT WITH VAN WELL AT 1630 TODAY TO DISCUSS WITH HIM QUESTIONS RAISED BY REF D. STOESSEL
NOTE: NODIS CAPTION ADDED PER STATE 199009, AUG 20 77

UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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